

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus comprising:

a burner burning a fuel within a furnace in a theoretical air ratio or less;

~~an a plurality of air port-ports~~ arranged downstream of the burner and placed along a width direction of the furnace, each of said plurality of air ports being separated into an air injection port injecting additional combustion air into the furnace and an inhibiting gas injection port injecting a nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas constituted by at least one gas selected from the group consisting of combustion exhaust gas and a mixed gas of the combustion exhaust gas and air inhibiting a nitrogen oxide from being generated in a mixing region formed by both of a combustion gas generated by burning the fuel by means of said burner and the additional combustion air injected from said air port or near the mixing region, and including a flow rate regulator, wherein said inhibiting gas injection port is provided on an outer peripheral portion of said air injection port, at least a part of said outer peripheral portion being on a burner side of said air injection port, and wherein the flow rate regulators of the plurality of air ports are configured to provide more flow of the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas to an air port close to the furnace center portion than to the air port close to the furnace side wall of the plurality of air ports; and

at least one blower for circulating combustion exhaust gas from an outlet of the furnace to an inlet of the flow path injecting a nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas, and for supplying the additional combustion air to the flow path injecting additional combustion air into the furnace.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said inhibiting gas injection port is formed in an annular shape so as to surround the air injection port of each of said air-~~port~~ ports.

6. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein a plurality of said inhibiting gas injecting ports are arranged in a peripheral direction so as to surround the air injection port of each of said air-~~port~~ ports.

7. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said inhibiting gas injection port is formed approximately in a circular arc shape so as to surround a part of the air injection port of each of said air-~~port~~ ports.

8. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein a plurality of said inhibiting gas injection ports are concentrically arranged in a part of an outer peripheral portion of the air injection port of each of said air-~~port~~ ports.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a system for supplying a part of exhaust gas recirculation within said furnace as the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas in a branched state.

11. (Previously Presented) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein a blower exclusive for the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is placed in said system for supplying a part of exhaust gas recirculation.

12. (Previously Presented) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is constituted by an exhaust gas after a temperature thereof is lowered by a heat exchanger.

13-14 (Canceled).

15. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-13

2, wherein a total supply flow rate of the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas supplied to said plurality of air ports is variable in correspondence to a load of said combustion apparatus.

16. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-43 2, wherein a total supply flow rate of the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas supplied to said plurality of air ports is variable in correspondence to a nitrogen oxide discharging concentration of said combustion apparatus.

17-26. (Canceled).